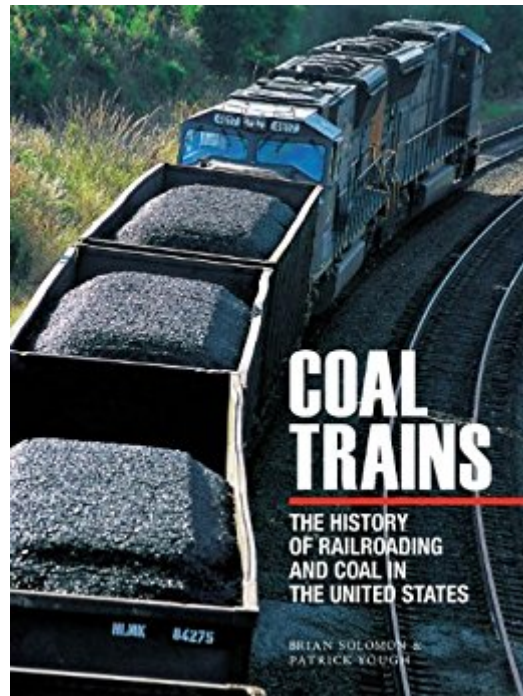


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# Coal Trains: The History Of Railroading And Coal In The United States



## Synopsis

From the first, U.S. railroads have carried coal from mines to docks, steel mills, and power plants across the country. In this authoritative book spanning the whole of that history, from the mid-nineteenth century to present, noted rail author Brian Solomon explores the railroads and hardware that have transported the fossil fuels that made America work. Brilliant period and contemporary photographs convey the drama of the enterprise: the very long and very heavy trains powering up mountain grades and thundering across barren prairies. At sites from the eastern and western U.S., past and present, readers see giant double-headed Norfolk and Western steam locomotives moving Appalachian coal in Virginia; modern CSX diesels dragging unit coal trains over the well-groomed former Chesapeake & Ohio main line; BNSF's SD70MACs with more than 100 hoppers in tow; Rio Grande locomotives snaking through the Rocky Mountains; and coal trains working full-throttle up Colorado's Tennessee Pass, cresting the Continental Divide at 10,000 feet above sea level. Taking up topics ranging from the colorful but now-defunct anthracite roads of eastern Pennsylvania to today's AC-traction diesels that work Wyoming's thriving Powder River Basin, Solomon reveals how for 150 years the unique demands of coal and America's demand for coal have prompted new railroad technologies.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Railfanning in the Southeast United States I see a lot of coal trains on the CSX and NS railroads. I have learned a few of the reporting marks, but I never really knew much about the history of coal carrying on the American Railroads. Over Memorial Day, I visited the Elkhorn Inn in Langraff, West Virginia which is located on the NS Pocahontas Subdivision in the Appalachian Coal Belt. While up there for the weekend, I had the chance to read *Coal Trains- The History of Railroading and Coal in the United States* by Brian Solomon and Patrick Yough, published by Voyageur Press in 2009. The book covers the entire United States and starts back in the mid-1800s with the first coal carriers in Pennsylvania such as the Philadelphia and Reading (P&R) carried coal via canals and inclined planes to eastern seaboard cities. The next major section of the book covers Appalachian Coal, starting with the historical carriers such as the C&O and the N&W and moving to the modern operations of the NS and CSX. These sections were great being up in the West Virginia mountains as it helped explain the pattern of the rail lines in the region and also the history behind them. It was fascinating to see where many of the trains I've seen down in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida come from. The book continues west to Illinois. I never realized how much coal this region used to produce. I knew that Carbondale was the center of the coal industry there. Some coal is still mined in the region and shipped, but due to the high-sulfur content the mines are silent compared to the mid-20th Century.

Hi! This book was really interesting reading if you are interested in how the railroad industry is very close connected to the coal mines and how the rolling equipment has been developing through the decades in the states and threw out the world to become of what it is today, a very effective transportation hauler of coal in today's modern railroad industry. This writer Brian Salomon has done this book also very well. This book is also very well written I must say. I couldn't find one single misspellings in it too. The book shows in a very thorough way how it all started in the early ~1850: s with very simple cars and low axle loads to haul coal in them. The book also explains very well how the cars and equipment for this kind of hauling have been developed through the decades to what it is today, this with lots of good illustrative pictures and with just as good comments to these pictures. It also explains very well why this kind of hauling has been the big industry as it has become of today, in our modern railroad industry, not only in the states, but also all over the world. The only thing that I am really missing in this book too, is a summary chapter where you can

see all these different variants of cars through the years are put up in some kind of diagram or table. This, so it will be more easy to see the small changes of development as the evolution has been going forward of this kind of equipment. But if I summarize this book overall I can really recommend it for those who want to get some really thorough information of how the history of coal traffic industry has been developed through the decades to get there of what it is today. It is very "nutritious" of information.

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